Fire Code & Safety Requirements

FOR GENERAL SPECIAL EVENTS

Event Planning

Organizers planning special events held within or outside buildings which deviate from regular operations of the space or building shall prepare an emergency response plan (ERP) specific to the event itself This ERP is to include the following information, and must be submitted to Chestermere Fire Services at least 10 business days before the event.

1. Emergency contact numbers for all parties involved (organizers) in the event.
2. What to do in case of an emergency (fire or medical) complete contingency plans.
3. Detailed floor plans and layout of the special event.

The following is a standard guide for event organizer's to ensure occupant safety and compliance with the Alberta Fire Code and Chestermere Fire Services requirements during special events Please follow this guide carefully, as these items will be reviewed for compliance during required routine walkthroughs conducted by Chestermere Fire Services, prior to the commencement of the event Should you have any questions or concerns in meeting compliance requirements, contact the Chestermere Fire Services at (403) 272-9878.

Code References

- All Alberta Fire Code 2019 (AFC) references are from Division B unless stated otherwise
- All Alberta Building Code 2019 (ABC) references are from Division B unless stated otherwise
- All National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) codes are referenced in the Alberta Fire Code. Maintenance records for all tests required under the AFC shall be kept on the premise for a minimum of two years for examination by the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ). (AFC Division C 2.2.1.2)

Open Flames & Pyrotechnical Displays

Open flames and pyrotechnical displays require permits through Chestermere Fire Services. Compliance and minimum requirements with these activities will be addressed upon permit application.

Fire Department Access

Fire department access to buildings and laneways must be maintained for fire department vehicles at all times. (AFC 2.5.1.5)

Fire department connections for sprinkler and standpipe systems shall be kept free of obstructions; this includes: storage of combustible materials and parking of vehicles. (AFC 2.5.1.4)

Fire Alarm, Sprinkler & Standpipe System

- Fire alarm systems must be maintained in an operable condition at all times. (AFC 6.3.1.1)
- Fire alarm detectors (smoke and heat), signalling devices (horns, strobes and bells), as well as initiating devices (pull stations) shall remain unobstructed. (AFC 6.3.1.1)
- Storage or visual displays shall not interfere with fire sprinkler head discharge; a 450 mm (18 inch) clearance is required from fire sprinkler heads (NFPA 13)

Fire Extinguishers

- At least one 2A:10BC or larger fire extinguisher shall be available and to which there is a maximum travel distance of 25m.
- Where added combustibles are required inside a building space for special events, additional fire extinguishers meeting minimum ratings shall be provided and spaced evenly to accommodate the added fuel load in the building.
- All fire extinguishers shall be serviced and tagged annually by a certified fire extinguisher company. (AFC 6.2.1.1)

Exit Lights

- All exit lights and exit signs shall be illuminated when the building is occupied. (AFC 2.7.3.1)
- Exit lights shall remain unobstructed from view. (AFC 2.7.3.1)

Emergency Lights

- Emergency lights, where required by the Alberta Building Code, shall be maintained in operable condition and tested annually by a certified company. (AFC 2.7.3.1)
- Emergency lights shall remain unobstructed from view. (AFC 2.7.3.1)
- Where a building is equipped with an emergency power source supplying power to lighting systems during power outages, the emergency power supply and lighting system shall be inspected annually by a certified testing company. (AFC 6.5.1.1)

Exits

- Exit doors must be clearly visible at all times and free of storage accumulation.
- The exterior of all exit doors shall also be free of storage and accumulation of snow in the winter months.
- All locking, latching or other fastening devices on exit doors must permit the door to be readily opened from the inside requiring no keys, special devices or specialized knowledge of the door opening mechanism. (ABC 3.4.6.15)

Decorative Materials

- Decorative materials added to walls and ceiling shall meet the minimum flame-spread rating requirements of the surfaces on which they are installed. (AFC 2.3.1.3)
- Any decorative and festive materials added in assembly occupancies, including but not limited to crepe paper decorations, drapes, curtains or other combustible trimmings or ornaments and Christmas trees, shall be of flame resistant type or conform to CAN/ULC-S109, "Flame Tests of Flame-Resistant Fabrics and Films." (AFC 2.3.1.3 & 2.3.2.1)

Open Floor Areas

- Open floor areas intended for the gathering of occupants during a special event in the following arrangements: non-fixed seats, non-fixed seats and tables, standing space, and spaces intended for the sale of alcohol, shall have floor plans reviewed and approved by the Fire Prevention Branch. These areas are subject to maximum occupant load requirements and certificate issuance.
- Seating and table arrangements shall be in accordance with the Alberta Fire Code 2014 – Section 2.7 Safety to life.

Chairs

- Maximum 15 chairs in a row with chairs tied together.
- 400 mm distance shall be provided between the back of a row of chairs and the next forward projection of the following row of chairs.
- Aisles shall be a minimum width of 1,100 mm.

Tables & Chairs

- Where tables are arranged in rows, the spacing between the nearest edges of tables in 2 successive rows shall not be less then: 1,400 mm where seating is arranged on both sides of the tables or,1,100 mm where seating is on one side only.

Fireworks & Pyrotechnical Displays

- Fireworks and pyrotechnical displays require permits through Chestermere Fire Services. Compliance and minimum requirements with these activities will be addressed upon permit application.

Open Flames & Smoking

- Open flame devices and smoking shall not be permitted in a tent or air-supported structure while it is occupied by the public. (AFC 2.9.3.3)

Tents & Air-Supported Structures

- Tents and air-supported structures, bleachers and raised platforms shall be constructed in conformance with the Alberta Building Code 2019.
- Tents shall adhere to the requirements of NFPA 701 - “Standard Methods of Fire Tests for Flame Propagation of Textiles and Films."
- Where a tent or air-supported structure is designed to accommodate more than 1,000 persons, a fire alarm system and emergency communication system shall be provided. (AFC 2.9.3.5)
- Flame retardant treatments shall be renewed as often as required to ensure that the material will pass the match flame test in NFPA 705 “Field flame test for textiles and films." (AFC 2.9.2.1)

Electrical Systems

- AFC 2.9.3.1
- Electrical systems and equipment in a tent or air-supported structure shall be maintained and operated in accordance with the electrical regulations made pursuant to the Safety Codes Act. All electrical equipment shall be inaccessible to the public.
- Cables on the ground shall be placed in trenches or protected by covers to prevent damage from traffic and tripping hazards.

Fire Watch

- A person shall be employed for no other duties than for fire watch when a tent or air-supported structure is occupied by more than 1,000 persons. (AFC 2.9.3.4)

Fire Department Access

- Fire department access to buildings and laneways must be maintained for fire department vehicles at all times. (AFC 2.5.1.5)

Fire Extinguishers

- All tents and air-supported structures shall be equipped with fire extinguishers meeting
- the requirements of NFPA 10 “Standard for Portable Fire Extinguishers."
- All fire extinguishers shall be serviced and tagged annually by a certified fire
- extinguisher company. (AFC 6.2.1.1)

Exits

- A maximum travel distance of 30m to an exit shall be provided. (ABC 3.4)
- Where only one exit is provided from a tent or air-supported structure, a maximum occupant load of 60 persons and a maximum travel distance to an exit of 15 m shall be adhered to.
- Exits and exit doors must be clearly visible at all times and free of storage accumulation. (AFC 2.4.1.1)
- The exterior of all exits shall also be free of storage and accumulation of snow in the winter months.
- All locking, latching or other fastening devices on exit doors must permit the door to be readily opened from the inside requiring no keys, special devices or specialized knowledge of the door opening mechanism. (ABC 3.4.6.15)

Decorative & Combustible Materials

- Decorative materials added to walls and ceiling shall meet the minimum flame-spread rating requirements of the surfaces on which they are installed. (AFC 2.3.1.3)
- Any decorative and festive materials added in assembly occupancies, including but not limited to crepe paper decorations, drapes, curtains or other combustible trimming or ornaments and Christmas trees, shall be of the flame-resistant type or conform to CAN/ULC-S109, “Flame Tests of Flame-Resistant Fabrics and Films. (AFC 2.3.1.3 & 2.3.2.1)
- Hay, straw, shavings or similar combustibles shall not be permitted within a tent or air-supported structure, except that sawdust or shavings may be used if kept damp. (AFC 2.9.3.2)
- The ground enclosed by a tent or air-supported structure and for not less than 3 m outside the structure shall be cleared of all flammable material or vegetation that will spread fire.(AFC 2.9.3.2)

Open Floor Areas

- Open floor areas intended for the gathering of occupants during special events in the following arrangements: non-fixed seats, non-fixed seats and tables, standing space, and spaces intended for the sale of alcohol, shall have floor plans reviewed and approved by Chestermere Fire Services. These areas are subject to maximum occupant load requirements and certificate issuance.
- Seating and table arrangements shall be in accordance with the Alberta Fire Code 2006 – Section 2.7 Safety to life.

Chairs

- Maximum 15 chairs in a row.
- Where the occupant load exceeds 200 people seats need to be tied or fixed together.
- 400 mm distance shall be provided between the back of a row of chairs and the next forward projection of the following row of chairs.
- Aisles shall be a minimum width of 1,100 mm.

Tables & Chairs

- Where tables are arranged in rows, the spacing between the nearest edges of tables in two successive rows shall not be less than: 1,400 mm where seating is arranged on both sides of the tables or,1,100 mm where seating is on one side only.

QUESTIONS? CONTACT US.

CHESTERMERE FIRE SERVICES
(403) 272-9878
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For emergencies dial 9-1-1

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